Marguerite Burke

Wimbledon High School Headmistress 1949-1962

Miss Marguerite McDonald Burke was born in 1899 in Rangoon, Burma (now Yangon, Myanmar), where her father was a police inspector under British rule. She was baptised in Rangoon Cathedral, later returning to England and attending Swindon Secondary School in Wiltshire, from 1917 to 1920 she studied for a BA in History at Royal Holloway College, University of London.

Between 1922 and 1948 she taught at three different schools, a grammar school, a county secondary school and at Kensington High School (GDST) as Head from 1939-48. She spent 1948-9 at Harvard in the USA as Rockefeller Research Fellow and was appointed as Headmistress of Wimbledon High School on Miss Littlewood's retirement in 1949. 'She came as a breath of fresh air', was much loved and admired, and retired as the Head of 'the top school in England', according to a national newspaper at the time.

Miss Burke died in Putney in June 1987, at the age of 86.

Further Reading

WHS 1962 magazine pp 4-8 for the tributes paid on Mis Burke's retirement.
http://wimbledonhighschool.daisy.websds.net/Filename.ashx?tableName=ta_publications&columnName=filename&recordId=90

WHS 1988 magazine p2 for the tributes on her death
http://wimbledonhighschool.daisy.websds.net/Filename.ashx?tableName=ta_publications&columnName=filename&recordId=47